

15 MAY 1975

Mr. George W. Saunders
Chairman, Working Group on
Relocation Costs
Inter-Agency Committee on Overseas
Allowances and Benefits for U.S.
Employees
General Services Administration
Arlington, Virginia 20406

Dear Mr. Saunders:

In conjunction with the review of certain travel entitlements by the working group which you will chair, I should like to bring to your attention two problems which this Agency has experienced.

During the past year several of our employees have complained about certain aspects of the weight limitations on the shipment and storage of household effects. The problem arises because of the grade groupings in the allowance tables and the distinctions between the "with family" and "without family" allowances. The complaints are in two general categories. As an example of the first, a senior secretary at the top of the GS-9 grade has an annual salary of \$16,693, is probably a very mature person with an established life style, generally has fifteen or more years of service, may own a home or occupy a larger apartment, and certainly has more HHE than a younger employee. In spite of that, her weight limitations for the shipment of HHE is the same as the entitlement of the youngest GS-7. The second comparison concerns the entitlements of married and single officers. There is a general feeling among single officers that their requirements for household effects are about the same as those of married officers of the same grade, with the only difference being the relatively small amount of personal effects of a spouse. A GS-12 single officer might thus contend that his standard of living is substantially the same as that of a GS-12 with a wife, and that his HHE weight allowance should be about the same.

The second problem concerns the shipment of personally owned vehicles to overseas posts. This problem has been complicated by several factors. First, the environmental features which must be incorporated into new U.S. automobiles create a number of problems in the operation and maintenance at the overseas post, and an employee will experience considerable difficulty in having the automobile readmitted to the United States when it is returned. At the same time employees are not inclined to purchase a foreign automobile because it cannot be shipped to the United States at government expense. It would also be subject to the same environmental restrictions as an American car at a U.S. port of entry. The third complicating factor is that foreign governments frequently specify the types of vehicles which may be imported and impose various restrictions on the sale or exportation of automobiles. Consequently, an employee may find it impossible to protect himself against losses when he tries to ship his automobile or dispose of it. This problem is certain to become acute as employee rotations reach the point that 1975 model automobiles are to be returned to the United States, and it would be useful if we could decide now how to cope with it.

It may be that there are no easy answers to these issues, but I should be grateful if your group could discuss them and give us the benefit of your collective experience.

Sincerely,

/s/ John F. Blake

John F. Blake
Deputy Director
for
Administration

SSA-DDA

[redacted] vld (5-14-75)

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Remarks:

Attached is a copy of a memo I think is self-explanatory. There are indications that we might be able to do something about the first problem (described in the second paragraph). With respect to the POV's the other agencies seem to be just as confused as we are.

SSA-DDA

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